

**2004 GALVESTON BAY INVASIVE SPECIES RISK ASSESSMENT
INVASIVE SPECIES SUMMARY**

Created by: Environmental Institute of Houston, University of Houston-Clear Lake
and the Houston Advanced Research Center

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| Common Name: Pirapatinga |
| Latin Name: <i>Piaractus brachypomus</i> |
| Category: Aquatic Animal |
| Place of Origin: Tropical America. "Orinoco and Amazon river basins, South America (Machado-Allison 1982) (http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/characid/pi_brach.html)." |
| Place of Introduction: "Reported from 16 states including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, and Virginia (http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/characid/pi_brach.html)." |
| Date of Introduction: Appears to have been introduced in the early to mid 1980s (http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/characid/pi_brach.html). |
| Growth/Size: Maximum size: 85 cm SL and 20 kg. |
| Feeding Habits/Diet: In the wild feeds on insects and decaying plants (http://www.wetwebmedia.com/FWSubWebIndex/serrasalminae1.htm). |
| <p>Physical Description: "Machado-Allison (1982) revised the pacus and provided distinguishing characteristics for <i>Piaractus brachypomus</i>. <i>Colossoma bidens</i> and <i>Colossoma brachypomum</i> are junior synonyms that have been widely used in the aquarium literature and in most past reports concerning fish introductions. Many <i>Piaractus</i> taken in U.S. waters have been misidentified and reported as the red piranha <i>Pygocentrus nattereri</i>. This pacu species is also confused often with the other common pacu species, tambaqui <i>Colossoma macropomum</i> and possibly with <i>Piaractus mesopotamicus</i>. An unpublished mimeograph by Taylor (1985) used to identify pacus was apparently based on information provided by Britski (1977) and Machado-Allison (1982). For photographs, see Machado-Allison (1982), Géry (1977, identified as <i>Colossoma</i> sp. on pages 252 and 256) and Goulding (1980, identified as <i>Colossoma bidens</i>) (http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/characid/pi_brach.html)."</p> <p>"<i>Piaractus brachypomum</i> possesses a unique rare feature, the adipose fin is rayed in adults. The species exceeds 600 mm SL, the juveniles are spotted (body) and the fins are dark edged in the young, they also have a distinctive large blotch on the opercle. Young ones resemble the piranha from the Orinoco <i>Pygocentrus cariba</i>, but completely harmless. Adults are uniformly dark or marbled (http://www.angelfire.com/biz/piranha038/piaractus.html)."</p> |
| <p>References (includes journals, agency/university reports, and internet links):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/characid/pi_brach.html. USGS Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Profiles. 2. http://www.angelfire.com/biz/piranha038/piaractus.html. Magellones, Frank. Silver Dollars, Pacus, and Tambaqui. Genus <i>Piaractus</i>. 3. http://www.wetwebmedia.com/FWSubWebIndex/serrasalminae1.htm. The Conscientious Aquarist. Piranha, Pacus & Silver Dollars, Subfamily Serrasalminae. 4. Machado-Allison, A. 1982. Estudio sobre la subfamilia Serrasalminae (Teleostei, Characidae). Prte 1. Estudio comparado de los juveniles de las "cachamas" de Venezuela (generos <i>Colossoma</i> y <i>Piaractus</i>). Acta Biologica Venezuelica 11(3):1-101. 5. Taylor, J. N. 1985. Key to the species of the genus <i>Colossoma</i> (Characidae: Serrasalminae) (II:26:85). Unpublished mimeograph. 3 pp. 6. Britski, H. 1977. Sobre o género <i>Colossoma</i> (Pisces-Characidae). Suplemento Ciencia y Cultura, Brasil, 29(7):810. 7. Géry, J. 1977. Characoids of the world. Tropical Fish Hobbyist Publications, Inc., Neptune City, NJ. 8. Goulding, M. 1980. Fishes of the forest: explorations in Amazonian natural history. University of California Press, Los Angeles, CA. |
| <p>Available Mapping Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. USGS Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Profiles. http://nas.er.usgs.gov/fishes/accounts/characid/pi_brach.html |